

**INTERPRETATION IC 15-2001-2 OF  
ANSI/ASHRAE STANDARD 15-2001  
SAFETY STANDARD FOR REFRIGERATION SYSTEMS**

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**Request from:** Mr. Mark Ballman (e-mail: BallmanM@webb-tech.com), Webb Technologies, Inc., 3302 Croft Street, Norfolk, VA 23513.

**Reference:** This request for interpretation refers to the requirements presented in ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 15-2001, Section 9.7.8 (page 17), regarding pressure-relief device discharge piping.

**Background:** In Section 9.7.8 where it mentions, “shall discharge to the atmosphere at a location not less than 15 ft. above the adjoining ground level” needs some interpretation. Consequently a relief line to atmosphere was observed to be piped 15 ft. above the ground level along an outside wall, but 10 ft. below the roof line of an industrial facility where refrigeration operators make rounds or adjust/isolate valves.

**Interpretation:** ASHRAE Section 9.7.8 states “the discharge from pressure-relief devices to the atmosphere shall be not less than 15 ft. above the adjoining ground level...”. The ASHRAE wording “adjoining ground level” is truly “terra firma” if the roof is only occupied for roof maintenance (i.e., like a home roof). If the roof is normally occupied by an operator performing rounds on the roof (i.e., at an industrial facility with valve groups and gauges on the roof), the “adjoining ground level” means rooflines.

**Question:** Is this Interpretation correct?

**Answer:** No.

**Comment:** The intent of the “adjoining ground level” section is to prevent exposure of the building occupants and passers-by to contact with discharged refrigerants. Section 9.7.8 further stipulates, “The discharge shall be terminated in a manner that will prevent the discharged refrigerant from being sprayed directly on personnel in the vicinity...”. Thus, if the refrigerant discharge is on the roof, consideration needs to be given to preventing discharge on personnel who may be on the roof.